

Congressional Resolution Honoring State Veterans Homes

HCON 347 RFS

109th CONGRESS
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H. CON. RES. 347
IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

July 25, 2006

Received and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Honoring the National Association of State Veterans Homes and the 119 State veterans homes providing long-term care to veterans that are represented by that association for their contributions to the health care of veterans and the health-care system of the Nation.

Whereas the National Association of State Veterans Homes was established in 1954 by a group of administrators of State veterans homes to represent the interests of those homes in a unified voice before Congress and the Executive Branch;

Whereas the National Association of State Veterans Homes functions on an all-volunteer basis and focuses on

endeavors that improve the conditions of care furnished to veterans by State veterans homes, elevate and monitor the qualifications for managers of such homes, and provide continuing education standards for staff who provide care to veterans in State veterans homes;

Whereas the National Association of State Veterans Homes has been and continues to be in the forefront of developing and supporting new methods and models for providing long-term care services to elderly veterans, such as hospice care, respite care, Alzheimer's care, and adult day health care;

Whereas State veterans homes, which provide long-term care to thousands of veterans, were established initially in the States of Connecticut, Kansas, Ohio, and Maine in 1868 to house, feed, and care for thousands of homeless, wounded, and permanently scarred Union soldiers and thus have been in existence since before the establishment of the Department of Veterans Affairs, the earlier Veterans' Administration, and its predecessor agencies;

Whereas in 1888 Congress authorized the Federal payment of a daily allowance of 20¢ for the care of each former soldier or sailor in a State home-hospital, an allowance that continues today in the form of a per diem grant program administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs that is authorized to provide up to 50 percent of the average daily cost of care, but currently provides only approximately 30 percent;

Whereas the Department of Veterans Affairs further participates in the care of veterans in State homes with a matching grant program to support construction and major renovation projects to sustain those homes and build towards sufficient levels of available, high-quality health care;

Whereas the State veterans homes offer long-term services to eligible veterans in need of such services on certification of the Department of Veterans Affairs at 119 facilities in 47 states and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico;

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Whereas the States determine the allocation of nursing home beds in individual facilities, and establish the eligibility of veterans and their dependents to occupy those beds, following Federal guidelines;

Whereas within the limits of their capacities, the State veterans homes provide care for over 27,500 veterans each day, accounting for more than 50 percent of the total national long-term care bed capacity for veterans, thereby sharing the enormous responsibility of caring for veterans with the Department of Veterans Affairs in an admirable partnership;

Whereas State veterans homes provide quality care for elderly and disabled veterans at an average daily cost that is significantly less than nursing homes operated by the Department of Veterans Affairs;

Whereas the number of elderly veterans, particularly those over age 85, continues to rise and the need for long-term care services for those veterans will continue to rise in the coming years; and

Whereas the Nation's State veterans homes continue to achieve their purpose of improving and sustaining the health of elderly, sick, and severely disabled veterans by assuring access to affordable nursing care in settings that provide personal dignity to truly deserving veterans, often at the end of lives spent in service to the Nation: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress--

- (1) honors the National Association of State Veterans Homes and the 119 State veterans homes providing long-term care to veterans that are represented by that association for their significant contributions to the health care of veterans and to the health care system of the Nation;
- (2) commends the thousands of individuals who work in, or on behalf of, State veterans homes for their contributions in caring for elderly and disabled veterans;
- (3) recognizes the importance of the partnership between the States and the Department of Veterans Affairs in providing long-term care to veterans; and
- (4) affirms the support of Congress for continuation of the State homes program to address the known and anticipated needs of the Nation's veterans for institutional long-term care services.

Passed the House of Representatives July 24, 2006.

Attest:

KAREN L. HAAS,

Clerk.

END